

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00  
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INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN  
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG  
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO  
AMEMBASSY MASERU  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, WZ

SUBJECT: KING ANNOUNCES END TO TERMS OF OFFICE OF  
CABINET AND PARLIAMENT

1. SUMMARY: KING SOBHUZA ANNOUNCED MARCH 22 THE EXPIRY OF  
TERMS OF OFFICE OF ALL CABINET MEMBERS AND MEMBERS OF  
PARLIAMENT. SUCCESSORS ARE TO BE SELECTED IN PROCESS  
INVOLVING TINKHUNDLA (RURAL-BASED BODIES), WHICH WILL  
ADD TO GOVERNMENT'S CONSERVATIVE BENT. METHOD AND TIMING  
OF SELECTION NOT YET MADE KNOWN. IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE  
OF SWAZILAND POLICIES AND US-SWAZILAND RELATIONS FOLLOW  
SEPTTEL. END SUMMARY.

2. IN SPEECH TO SWAZI NATION IN ROYAL CATTLE BYRE AT  
LOBAMBA ON MARCH 22, KING SOBHUZA PRAISED THE MEN WHO  
HAD SERVED NATION IN PARLIAMENT AND SAID THEY AND  
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CABINET MEMBERS (WHO HAD TO BE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT)  
WOULD BE REPLACED. CHARACTERIZING UK-IMPOSED CON-  
STITUTION AS "WHITE MAN'S EXPERIMENT," HE SAID GOS  
WOULD CONTINUE TO GOVERN WITHOUT CONSTITUTION AND  
CITED FACT THAT UK AND ISRAEL GOVERN WITHOUT  
CONSTITUTIONS.

3. KING SAID NEW SYSTEM WOULD BE BASED ENTIRELY ON TRADITIONAL TINKHUNDLA. NUMBER OF TINKHUNDLA TO BE INCREASED TO 32. PEOPLE IN EACH TINKHUNDLA DISTRICT ARE TO CONSULT WITH THEIR CHIEFS IN NOMINATING PERSONS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR APPOINTMENT TO "PARLIAMENT." KING URGED PEOPLE NOT TO NOMINATE ONLY WESTERN-EDUCATED PEOPLE BUT ALSO UNEDUCATED. MINISTERS ARE TO BE CHOSEN FROM AMONG RANKS NOMINATED BY TINKHUNDLA. AS USUAL, SOBHUZA DID NOT SPECIFY DETAILS, SUCH AS WHETHER OR NOT EACH TINKHUNDLA DISTRICT WOULD HAVE SINGLE REPRESENTATIVE, OR WHETHER PERSON APPOINTED AS MINISTER WOULD FIRST HAVE TO BE APPOINTED TO "PARLIAMENT", OR WHETHER A TINKHUNDLA DISTRICT COULD HAVE ONE PERSON FROM LIST APPOINTED TO "PARLIAMENT" AS MINISTER. NOR DID KING INDICATE TIMING OF CHANGES. PRESENT CABINET REMAINS IN CARETAKER STATUS.

4. COMMENT: SOBHUZA'S ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW "ELECTORAL" SYSTEM IS SMASHING VICTORY FOR TRADITIONALISTS. AS ONLY METHOD OF CHOOSING NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES, TINKHUNDLA SYSTEM:

A. BREAKS UP URBAN-BASED VOTING BLOCS THAT HAVE BEEN STRONGEST SOURCE OF OPPOSITION. THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED BECAUSE EACH PERSON MUST RETURN TO FAMILY KRAAL (HOMESTEAD) TO CONSULT WITH HIS CHIEF, THUS DISPERSING YOUNG AND WORKING-CLASS VOTERS NOW CONCENTRATED IN URBAN AREAS.

B. DEPRIVES ALL BLACK NON-SWAZIS RESIDING IN SWAZILAND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF VOICE IN GOVERNANCE OF COUNTRY.

C. DISENFRANCHISES ALL WHITE SWAZIS WITHOUT TIES TO KRAALS.

D. REMOVES SOURCE OF FRICTION TOWARDS KING, WHO HAS OFTEN BEEN CRITICIZED FOR POOR PERFORMANCE OF MINISTERS. BY ALLOWING TINKHUNDLA TO NOMINATE, AFTER CONSULTING THEIR PEOPLE, LATTER ARE FORCED TO ACCEPT ANY BLAME.

E. ESTABLISHES WHAT WILL BE, UNTIL NEW CONSTITUTION IS PROMULGATED, A CONSULTATIVE BODY THAT CANNOT CHALLENGE KING FOR POWER BUT STILL GIVES APPEARANCE OF FORM OF POPULAR REPRESENTATION.

F. ALLOWS KING, IF HE SO CHOOSES, BEHIND SCENES, TO APPROVE LISTS OF NOMINEES AND TO CHOOSE THOSE WHO WILL FORM CONSULTATIVE BODY.

5. FYI, TINKHUNDLA ARE RURAL COUNCILS OF CHIEFS HEADED BY NON-CHIEF APPOINTED BY KING. TINKHUNDLA HAVE PLAYED IMPORTANT ROLE IN DISSEMINATION IN RURAL AREAS OF INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS FROM KING AND SWAZI NATIONAL COUNCIL. KING ANNOUNCED IN JANUARY THIS YEAR THE APPOINTMENT OF AN OFFICER TO BE IN CHARGE OF ALL TINKHUNDLA, WHICH SIGNALLED LATTER'S FUTURE EXPANDED ROLE.

6. SEPTTEL FOLLOWS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE OF SWAZILAND POLICY AND US-SWAZILAND RELATIONS.  
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## Message Attributes

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